

Welcome from the Principal

Hello, Family! Welcome to the Village 2019-2020!

This year, we are exploring all the ways that all of us – students, parents, staff, and community – can work together in support of exceptional and lifelong learning and growing outcomes for our young people. Our school has expanded in many ways beyond its number of students. We are growing in the depth of our programming, the scope of our social-emotional learning opportunities, the dedication and involvement with our community work.

Our core elements of arts-integration, place-based education, and project-based approaches to learning are still front and center. New to our academic and Social-Emotional Learning programming is the addition of an Early Learning Play Specialist (ELPS) to promote our play-based approach to classroom instruction in our K-1 classes, work in small groups with students who need additional social and emotional support and also teach a “Curiosity” class for our Kindergarteners and First Graders that encourages and supports a child-directed exploration of the world and fosters a love of learning to last a lifetime.

As lifelong learners ourselves, we continue to recognize the need to understand, reflect on, and disrupt racial inequities in our world as they impact our students and their ability to achieve, grow, and excel in their lives. We will continue our studies about Implicit Bias and Equity Issues in Education so that we as educators can provide and sustain an environment where our students are exposed to every opportunity and resource needed to promote their success.

Finally, in this “Lucky Number Seventh” year of our school’s operation, we want to help YOU grow your knowledge and experience in the ways that we implement instructional practices, use restorative practices to support healthy social-emotional development in our students, and reflect on our own interactions and roles in our community. You will be invited to parent work sessions with our staff and outside trainers to learn about and practice what the staff uses in our daily practice. There will also be some sessions on how you can engage in Self-Care. You are so very important; when was the last time you took care of YOU? This is offered so that we can be on the same page as we work to serve, strengthen, and fortify our entire school family – from home and in school! ☺

In all of these ways, we will move closer to fulfilling our mission to ensure that our “young people will be collaborative learners and creative thinkers who become leaders, active citizens, effective communicators, and good stewards of their environment.”

The road ahead of us is filled with possibilities and adventures, and I look forward to traveling it with all of you. It takes a Village, and its starts with us.

In Caring, Questioning, Collaborating, and Creating...



Traci Mathena
Principal

Welcome from the Executive Director

Dear Families,

We are about to begin a phenomenal seventh year together at Creative City! When I began this work as a parent-founder over eight years ago, the Creative City I joined was still just a beautiful idea—an idea that children are independent and resilient, that they can help direct their own learning, and that creativity and play have a place in all parts of the school day.

What was once an idea has transformed into a thriving model of child-centered, arts-integrated, place-based education. We are a school where all of our community members have a voice. Our staff has worked tirelessly this summer – first running our largest summer program ever, serving more than 130 students in K-5 in our Branching Out program, and then writing curriculum and training together as a team to refine their own skills and build on last year’s successes. We’re so excited to now welcome students and their families back to school for another year, and I’m excited for my own children to return to the second and fourth grades.

This year we are focusing on making sure we meet the needs of the whole child, while also deepening and sharpening focus in core academic instruction. Arts are expanding, academic interventions are becoming more specific and individualized, and social and emotional supports for students are becoming more broad. We are claiming every part of our physical space to best serve our students and our community – from our teaching garden, to our Outdoor Classroom and natural play space, to our hallways and front building façade. You are about to begin seeing changes that make our core values shine through every part of our facility and grounds.

I’m so excited to continue to be here in partnership with all of you, our school families, and continue to do my part to make Creative City the best school any of us could ever imagine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marisa Canino', written in a cursive style.

Marisa Canino
Executive Director

Creative City Core Values & School Pledge

We are a community.

We connect with each other, our environment, our neighborhood,
and our world.

We care.

We question.

We collaborate.

We create.

At Creative City, we will....



BE PRESENT.

BE A READER.

BE A PROBLEM SOLVER.

BE CREATIVE.

BE KIND.

“Home Sweet Home”
The Creative City Public Charter School Song
Words and Music by Josh Soto

(Verse and Chorus – SING TWICE)

Creative City is the place where I belong!
I love you so...Yes I do!
The only school for me is YOU --
How much I love you so...Yes I do!
Will I plant a garden?
Will I sing and draw a masterpiece?
I want all to know that...

That MY school is my Hometown!
Where I make the sweetest sounds...
Where I laugh and play, learn how...
So it feels like home. (to beginning)
(after second time)
So it feels like home
So it feels like home

(ENDING)

Home sweet home! Home from home!
Home sweet home -- I love you so
Home sweet home! Home from home!
Home sweet home -- I love you so... Yes I do!

About Creative City

Mission

Creative City Public Charter School uses Baltimore City's natural and built environments and communities as a learning foundation. Our elementary school, where teachers, students, and parents share governance and cooperate on curriculum and community decisions, builds on the inquisitive nature of children to drive the project-based, arts-integrated curriculum, developing self-directed critical thinkers.

Vision

Young people will be collaborative learners and creative thinkers who become leaders, active citizens, effective communicators, and good stewards of their environment.

Equity Statement

We believe all children have unlimited capacity. We challenge ourselves and each other to confront the historical and ongoing effects of structural racism. We commit to grounding every action and decision in equity and justice.

Core Elements

What is place-based education?

Place-based education uses the local community and environment as a vehicle for learning core skills and exploring questions that are relevant to Baltimore and to students' lives. Place-based education increases student motivation and performance, helps students develop stronger ties to their local environment, and allows the school to make positive change in the community. Place-based education is experience-based, and in kindergarten, play-based. Students will learn about the built environment, infrastructure, residents, businesses, culture, resources, challenges and the history of the city around them.

What is arts integration?

At Creative City we weave the visual, musical and performing arts into our curriculum as a way to foster student-centered learning, reflection, and personal expression, and a way to deepen conceptual learning, encourage creative thinking, promote collaboration, and strengthen the social environment within the school.

Using the arts in all subjects is our way of delivering information and instruction, and a method of assessing student mastery. Students *observe* art to stimulate discussion on pertinent themes and *make* art to explore problems and reflect on lessons learned.

What is cooperative community?

Creative City gives young people the opportunity to be active thinkers and leaders through decision-making about their school culture and classroom. Parents, teachers, and community members all have a role in creating and supporting the school's climate and curriculum. Our Board of Directors is directly elected by all teachers and parents, and includes teachers, parents, and community member representatives. Students, teachers, and parents share the responsibility of choosing new teachers and administrators.

What is a community school?

Creative City is a community school. This means we know that families, schools, and community resources make children successful together. We will keep the lights on during evenings and weekends, making Creative City a hub of learning and enrichment for adults and older kids in our community, as well as our students. We will build upon partnerships with strong organizations in the neighborhood, bringing their knowledge and wisdom into the classroom and into our whole-family programming. The School Family Association will coordinate these efforts alongside the Executive Director. We will build on our community's assets and coordinate programs, services or resources for our students' whole families, supporting their needs, dreams and aspirations.

Governance

Creative City Leadership

Creative City is a diverse and cooperative community. This is true in the classroom and also extends to the school's leadership through a shared governance model. Creative City is led by an all-volunteer Board of Directors, elected by the membership at our Annual Meeting. Members include parents of current students, Park Heights neighborhood residents, the staff of the school, and the founding families. The Board is designed to have a majority of seats for parents, with additional seats for teachers, the Principal, the Executive Director, neighborhood residents, and community members at large. Board members are elected at our Annual Meeting each spring.

The Board contracted with Baltimore City Public Schools to operate Creative City after a rigorous 800-page application, panel interviews, and presentations to the school board. It is the Board's responsibility to hire, orient, support and evaluate the Executive Director (our financial and operational leader), who in turn oversees and supports the Principal (our instructional leader). The Board also makes policy and oversees management of the budget.

Decisions about the day-to-day operation of the school are made by the Principal and Executive Director, with significant input from school families and (whenever possible) students.

Academics

Literacy

Creative City follows a Balanced Literacy approach to its Language Arts program. Our Balanced Literacy Program uses the Fountas and Pinnell Classroom Literacy Program to support whole group, small, group, and independent learning opportunities. This cohesive, multi-text approach to literacy instruction includes interactive read-aloud, reading mini-lessons, shared reading, phonics/spelling/word study lessons, guided reading, book clubs, and independent reading. We use the Writers Workshop approach to help our budding writers build skills and find their voice. Students are encouraged to discover and refine their writing style by composing pieces of writing “that matter” to them and are relevant to their own lives. Key writing and editing skills are taught through the composition of this kind of authentic writing which gives the students more ownership of and connection to the learning, which can then be applied to any kind of writing they will do in the future.

Math

Creative City uses Great Minds: Eureka Math as its math curriculum. *Eureka Math* – written by teachers and mathematicians – presents math in a logical progression that allows teachers to know what incoming students have mastered and supports preparing students for what comes next. Students learn problem solving as a more than just a process of steps; they are taught to understand WHY the process works, which allows them to then apply that process to other problems – mathematical or real-life. Eureka Math teaches mathematics as a “story,” and builds students’ knowledge logically and thoroughly instead of relying on memorization of facts and formulas. This authentic, real-world curricular strategy supports Creative City’s approach to math which focuses on problem-solving to enable teachers to integrate math lessons with projects and art concepts by bringing mathematics learning into the Research, Create, Connect framework (described in the next section).

Play-Based Kindergarten

Our kindergarten adheres to developmentally appropriate practices as put forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. “A developmentally appropriate environment encourages a child to play—to practice emerging skills, try out new ideas, and make new discoveries” (Zigler, Singer, and Bishop-Josef, p.34). We approach students as competent and capable learners while providing meaningful, hands-on experience across the curriculum with extended periods of investigation. Teachers work as facilitators to create a learning environment that offers opportunities for experiential learning appropriate for a variety of learning styles. We meet state curriculum standards with meaningful, fun, and engaging teacher-led activities, as well as with student-directed interaction in a carefully designed classroom with centers rich in math and literacy-related materials, and opportunities to develop inquiry skill. By allowing our students to participate in self-directed and teacher-facilitated play, students develop high-level thinking skills, language skills, and empathy. Our program will have some time set aside solely for developmentally appropriate math and language arts instruction. The skills introduced will be reflected in available classroom materials and will enrich children’s play. We document children’s learning on an ongoing basis, and we teach children to participate in this process of reflection through writing, drawing, and communicating about their work. This kind of reflection will also be an assessment of learning that informs instruction and facilitates student growth.

Project Time

Students spend time regularly involved in project work. Project themes will be related to Social Studies and Science standards; for example, themes in fifth grade may be related to colonial America. Although the themes of project time will be drawn from Science and Social Studies, Language Arts and Math content and skills will be incorporated into project time as much as possible.

Students will connect their project theme to their local built and natural environment. While investigating these themes, students will complete a variety of short- and long-term projects. Projects will be arts integrated; students learn about art connected to their overarching theme and also produce works of art that reflect on each trimester's theme. Although the overarching project themes will most often be chosen in advance by teachers, students have input on the type, scope, and direction of individual projects during the trimester. Teachers also work with students to ensure that all students are able to participate in the project in meaningful ways that challenge but do not overwhelm them.

Projects follow a three-part process we call Research, Create, Connect (RCC). In the first part of the RCC process, Research, students and teachers identify a question or issue to focus on, related to the trimester's theme. Students research through brainstorming and discussing what they already know, going on relevant trips, bringing in speakers, surveying people, reading texts, looking at images, and watching media related to the theme. After exploring the issue from many angles, they are ready to refine their knowledge into a product that shares what they learned.

In the second phase (Create), students might write and illustrate a book of their findings, produce a mural that offers a solution to some challenges they explored, or create a poster that educates a target audience about the issue. The Create phase includes writing as well as using a variety of artistic media, and helps students process and analyze information.

The final phase, Connect, is when students present the product they have created with the wider community.

Arts & Athletics Classes

Creative City offers a full range of Arts & Athletics classes to students. Our students have Physical Education, Visual Arts, and Music during each week. Our Arts & Athletics teachers work with our classroom teachers to coordinate resource instruction, linking to classroom project work whenever possible.

Assessment

We aim to provide authentic, developmentally appropriate learning experiences for all Creative City students. Our cumulative, ongoing, authentic assessments are used to inform instruction. These include (but are not limited to) in-class observation of student learning, rubric-driven assessments, Reading Level assessments each trimester and summative (unit) assessments for mathematics given at the end of a skills module. Seeing what students can do in the classroom and adapting our instruction to support growth and achievement are at the heart of assessment at Creative City. We believe this is the most dynamic and accurate way of capturing our students' progress as they learn in a project-based, arts-integrated environment.

Our students participate in state-mandated assessments. The Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP, which was formerly PARCC) begins in the 3rd grade. Our students are also less formally assessed on an ongoing basis in literacy and math (as described above) to provide teachers with the information needed to continue providing appropriately challenging curriculum. Our first and fourth graders will also participate in the Terranova test, an assessment selected by our school as a complement to MCAP and a second point of data collection during students' time with us.

Homework

Primary homework for all students is to read at home with a family member/caregiver for 30 minutes each night. Talk to your child's teacher for ideas on how to make reading at home a rich experience for you and your family. At each grade level, teachers will sometimes recommend home practice to skills that need to be emphasized or send home material that needs to be prepared before class the next day to support a project.

In Kindergarten, students will receive less frequent homework and minimal "traditional" homework worksheets. As early learners require exposure to concepts rather than practicing of skills and facts. With the exception of work supporting projects, HW for this grade level is optional. Teachers will provide parents with specific guidelines for any assignments sent home.

In First and Second Grades, reading will still be the primary focus, but additional preparation assignments for projects (interviewing a family member, bringing something from home to talk about, etc.) will become more routine. Optional skills practice assignments may be sent home with students as determined by the teacher if assessment determines that the skill is something the student need to practice.

In Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades, homework will reflect the development of skills and the preparation for upper elementary/middle grades expectations as students begin their first experience with more complicated text and intricate problem solving. Students will have a combination of "traditional" assignments, project extensions, and skill reinforcement activities with the goal of bridging home and school together and to share the themes, subjects, and skills that students are learning.

Grading

Creative City uses academic trimesters and we issue report cards three times per year. Progress reports are issued at the midpoint of each trimester. Report cards are sent home with students and are available online using the Campus Portal. Final report cards are mailed home at the end of the year. *NOTE: During virtual learning, report cards are primarily accessed electronically and can be printed and mailed, or emailed by request only.* Our Grading policies are aligned with those of Baltimore City Public Schools and follow the same grading scale:

Kindergarten and 1st Grade

P = Proficient (80-100%)

I = In Process (60-79%),

N = Needs Development (Below 60%)

2nd Grade through 5th Grade

E = Excellent (90% and above)

G = Good (80-89%)

S = Satisfactory (70-79%)

P = Poor (60-69%)

U = Unsatisfactory (Below 60%).

Other notations may appear in special circumstances:

NTQ = Not taught this quarter: used for certain courses that are taught for a trimester

L = Late enrollment: used if student enrolled at a time too late in the trimester to issue a grade.

Components used to evaluate students and calculate a grade include:

- A. Classwork (70%) – assignments, projects, lab experiences, participation, and performances, etc. completed at school with the teacher
- B. Assessments (30%) – Assessments of learning through benchmarks, tests, final products, etc.

Homework is designed to be practice for students to support retention of learned skills and/or prepare students for upcoming in-class learning activities. It is reviewed by teachers but is not counted towards a student's grades.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to your teacher or to school administration if you have questions about anything you see on your child's report card.

School Policies & Important Information

School Calendar

Creative City's school calendar will be the same as Baltimore City Schools. We will have the same professional development days, holidays, and start and end dates as other Baltimore City Schools. Within that schedule, our school operates on a trimester rather than quarterly academic schedule, so report card dates will be different than most other schools.

Hours of School:

School doors open at 8:00 am. We are not able to supervise students prior to 8:00 am. Students will be in school from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm every day *except for Wednesday*. **On Wednesday afternoons we will dismiss at 12:45 pm.** Dismissal process occurs during the last 15 minutes of every day.

You MAY NOT USE the Shirley Ave parking lot (in front of school) or the alley in the back for parking, drop off or pick up.

Parking at Creative City:

You may park:

- in our Lower Lot (accessible via Keyworth Avenue one block south of school)
- in our rear parking lot, or
- in legal street parking on Towanda Avenue (next to the blue playground).

Student Drop-Off:

Students enter through the rear doors beginning at 8:00 am. Cars should approach school using Towanda Avenue. If dropping off only, cars can pull up to the door at the back of the building.

Parents & family members are welcome to join us for **Community Breakfast** and **Morning Assembly**, which includes student-led announcements. Family members who will be staying must follow the parking guidance above.

Students are LATE beginning at 8:30 am, and they are missing instruction. Students arriving at 8:31 am or later will receive a late pass at the rear door. Breakfast will still be available for students who need it until 9:00 am, although the selection may be limited. The rear doors close at 9:00 am. Students arriving later than 9:00 am must enter through the front doors and stop at the main office.

Student Dismissal and Pick-Up:

Dismissal begins at 2:45 pm on each day EXCEPT Wednesdays. On Wednesday, dismissal begins at 12:45. *After 2:30 pm (and 12:30 pm on Wednesdays), there will be no admittance to the school to pick up students early.*

If your child:

- **Walks home without an adult**, he/she will check out at the office before leaving the building. The must be on the list of students whose family gave them permission IN WRITING to walk home.
- **Is picked up by CAR**, the driver must come through the CAR LINE. To get in the line, please turn on to Grantley Ave., north of school, and then left on to Towanda Ave which continues into the roadway at the back of our school building – the same as morning drop off. **You must enter at Grantley rather than any street south of it to avoid causing traffic to back up on to our neighbor's side streets.** Our staff will be on the street to direct you and to deliver your child to your car. NOTE: Do not leave your car while it is in the pick-up line.
- **If you will be coming in to the school building to get a child,**
 - Kindergarten and 3rd Grade Students will be in their classrooms. Please enter the school through Side Door B, walk to your child's class, greet their teacher, and pick up your child.
 - All other students will be with their teachers in the Cafeteria. Please greet their teacher and pick up your child from the class line.

Please pick up your child promptly at dismissal. **We are not equipped to supervise students after 3:00pm (1:00pm on Wednesdays).** Families may contact United Educational Corp Programs (UEC) at 443-804-4209 to sign up for PAID before and/or after care, at our school.

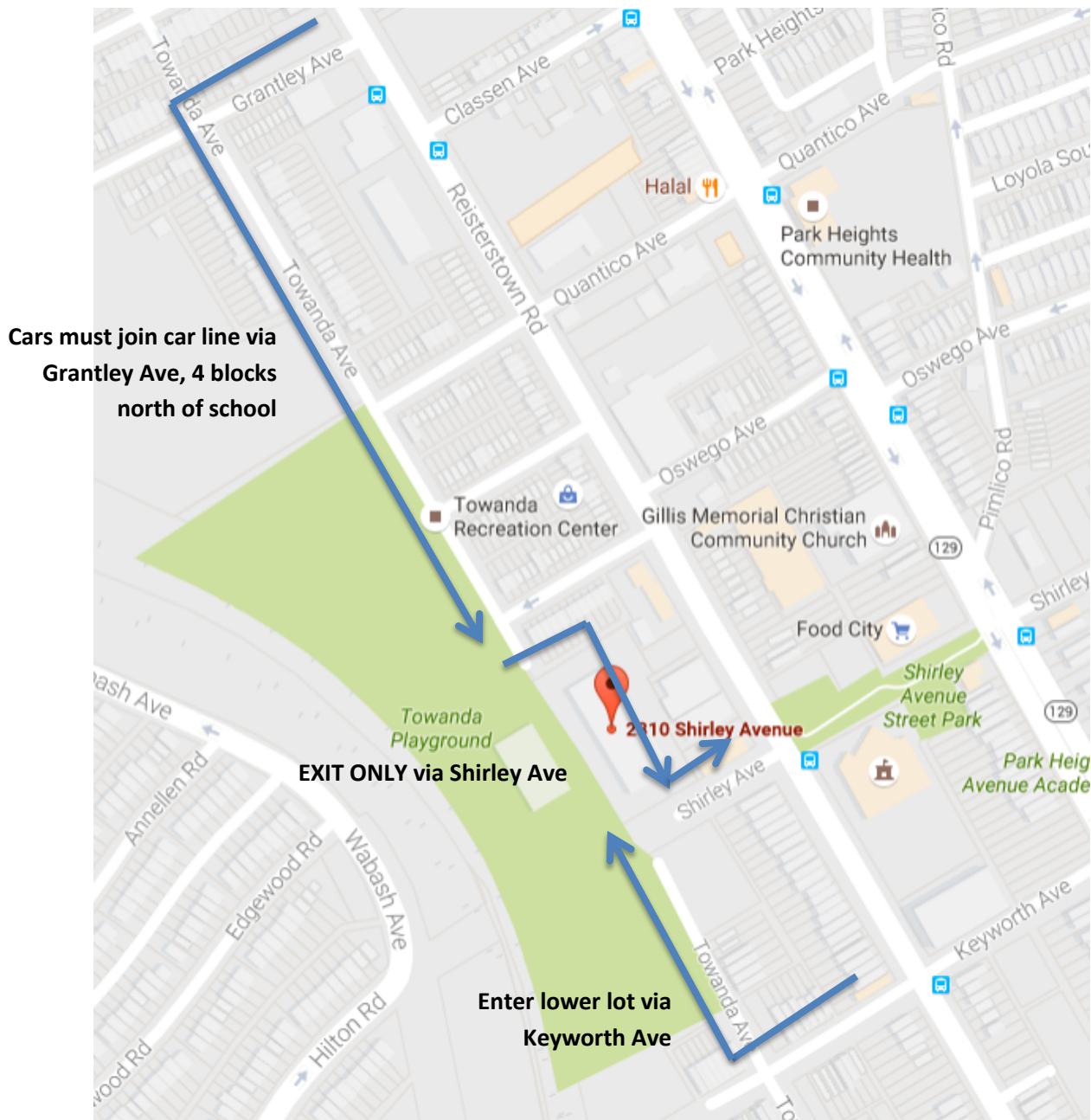
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS: An addition to providing daily before- and after-care, UEC is equipped to accommodate students who only have after-care needs on Wednesday afternoon early-dismissal days. Care must be arranged in advance. Cost may be reduced or waived if families qualify for child-care vouchers.

Early Pick-up:

Parents must come to the MAIN OFFICE for early dismissals and an office staff will call for the student to report to the office. ***Please provide a notice in advance indicating the date and time of the early dismissal and the reason for the early dismissal.*** These notes must be turned in to the student's teacher and subsequently sent to the main office to file in a documentation binder along with the early dismissal log.

Early pick-ups must be completed by 2:30pm. After 2:30pm, classes are packing up and transitioning to their dismissal areas, and it is difficult to retrieve a specific student during this transition. For safety and to minimize entries and exits during this time of school-wide transition, visitors without an appointment are not given access through the front door between 2:30pm and dismissal. Thank you for your understanding during this transition time.

We understand that early dismissals will sometimes be needed. Please limit early dismissals to the fewest needed so that your child does not miss valuable class time. Students that are chronically late and/or are regularly picked up early may be referred to Student Support Services to identify ways in which the school may support the family to enable student participation in the entire instructional day.



Before- and After-Care

United Education Corporation (UEC) offer fee-based before- and after-care to Creative City families on site at school. To learn more, visit UEC at www.uecprograms.com, email creativecity@uecprograms.com or call **443-804-4209**.

UEC Hours:

Before Care: 7:00 am to 8:00 am

After Care: 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Extended Care Wednesdays: 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Absences

Regular attendance is vital to your child's school experience. Frequent absences threaten a child's sense of connection in the community, disrupt the consistency of a student's learning, and/or force the child to simultaneously catch up on missed material while learning new material. School-wide, we are striving for attendance at 94% or greater for the entire school. This means that each child can only miss (on average) ***no more than one day per month, or 10 days per year.***

Children between the ages of 5 and 18 must attend school — it's the law. But there are times when an absence is unavoidable. If your child must be absent, please contact the office at 443-642-3600. Your child must return with a note for his/her teacher stating the date(s) and reason for the absence. The following reasons are accepted as EXCUSED in Maryland:

- Death in the immediate family (a parent note is acceptable)
 - Illness (a parent note is acceptable for an illness up to three days; a doctor's note is required for illnesses lasting longer than three days)
 - Court summons (the student's name must appear on the summons)
 - Hazardous weather conditions (a parent note is acceptable)
 - Observance of a religious holiday (a parent note is acceptable)
- In addition, absences for these reasons are considered excused and do not require documentation:
- School-approved activities or work
 - Suspension
 - Lack of authorized school transportation
 - District- or schoolwide closings due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions
- According to state law, an absence for any other reason is considered unexcused.

Chronic absence means missing more than 10% of school, or 18+ days per year. Chronic absence puts your child at academic risk. Families with frequent and/or chronic absences will receive contact from school, whether excused or unexcused. The purpose of this contact is supportive, and we would like to see if there are ways we can help ensure that your student attends school as frequently as possible. We may convene a meeting of our Student Support Team, engage our social worker, or schedule an attendance mediation. Our concern for your student's and family's well-being, and your student's academic success, is at the center of any of these supportive actions.

Inclement Weather Policy

Creative City Public Charter School follows the Baltimore City School System's Inclement Weather Policy. For information about school closings, delays, and early dismissals, please check your local television and radio station.

Emergency Dismissal Procedures

In the event of an emergency, BCPSS or Creative City Public Charter School may need to close. Creative City will follow the same inclement weather procedures as the rest of the school district. An announcement will be made via radio, T.V., and, when possible, phone calls. It is **IMPERATIVE** that families keep current phone numbers and emergency contact information on file in the office.

All families are required to complete an **emergency card at registration and/or during the first week of school**. It is IMPERATIVE that emergency cards be updated immediately if you have moved, your phone number has changed, or if any of the information on the card has changed.

Daily Life at Creative City

Recess, Weather, and Clothing

Creative City is not a uniform school and students can wear the clothes they choose within Baltimore City Schools' dress code (see below). **In our active and exploratory learning environment, we strongly recommend “play clothes” and not “dress clothes” as clothing will sometimes get dirty.**

- Your child should come to school in clothes that are comfortable for active learning and play, and which may get dirty.
- We recommend durable clothing that can hold up to lots of outdoor activity.
- Please choose shoes that are safe / suited for climbing and running, and which may get dirty.
- Tennis Shoes/Sneakers must be worn to PE class.

We have recess outside whenever possible, unless it is actively raining, below freezing, or other extreme weather. Students should always dress appropriately for the weather, especially in the colder months, with the assumption that they will go outside during the school day. Coats should be labeled with your child's name. ***Families who need assistance with winter coats, hats, or mittens should contact our main office and we will be happy to help!***

Each Wednesday, we celebrate school unity by wearing green and white, our school colors. You may purchase a Creative City T-Shirt for \$5 for children and \$7 for adults.

Creative City students must follow Baltimore City Public School Systems Dress Code Policy:

1. The style of clothes a student wears may not endanger him, her, or other students.
2. The style of clothes worn may not disrupt the daily school routine.
3. Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing, usually for safety reasons, while participating in classes such as physical education, shop, chemistry, etc., or in curricular and extracurricular classes or activities such as band, choir, dance, drama, and theater.

In addition, we also ask the following:

4. Hair, heads, and faces must be uncovered inside school facilities during the school day and during all school sponsored events.
5. Printed material on clothing should not contain offensive, threatening, or derogatory statements or statements promoting illegal drugs, alcohol, sex, violence or gangs.

6. All clothing material should be solid – not torn or see-through.
7. Undergarments of any kind should not be visible. (If we can see up it, down it, or through it, don't do it. *Underwear* belongs under WHAT you wear.)

Lunch

In all Baltimore City schools including Creative City, lunch is available free for all students. Menus for both breakfast and lunch will be posted in the school and published monthly online at www.baltimorecityschools.org. Students may also bring their own lunch from home if they prefer. Please note that refrigeration is not available for student lunches brought from home.

If your child has food allergies, please notify your classroom teacher as well as our school nurse promptly at the beginning of the school year.

We do not have the ability to refrigerate or heat up student lunches. If packing a lunch, please pack something that can be stored and eaten at room temperature.

Birthdays/Celebrations

Birthdays are special occasions for young children. Please check with your child's teacher if you would like to bring in a special snack to share with the class.

To maintain our school culture of inclusiveness, if you plan on distributing invitations to a celebration, please make sure that everyone receives an invitation. If you are planning to distribute invitations selectively, please do so outside of school grounds – through the mail, e-mail, etc.

Creative City does not generally celebrate holidays in any formal way, although discussion of special cultural and family traditions in class is encouraged. Some classes may share in celebration activities, but each teacher makes these decisions independently. Check with your child's teacher.

Staying Healthy at Creative City

Illness

Children who are ill should not be sent to school until they are able to participate fully in the program and are no longer contagious. Illnesses such as the flu, strep throat, stomach viruses, ringworm, conjunctivitis (“pink eye”), lice, and other childhood illnesses (i.e. chickenpox) spread quickly through the classroom. Our students will stay much healthier if families will take a responsible attitude toward this problem by keeping their children home as soon as symptoms appear, and until they are gone.

Please wait 24 hours after a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting ceases before sending your child back to school. When your child has to be absent due to an illness, please notify the office before 8:00 am, leaving a message if necessary.

At the discretion of the administration, a doctor's note may be required after a child has been absent for highly contagious conditions such as conjunctivitis or ringworm.

Physical Conditions

If your child has a chronic condition such as asthma, headaches, seizures, or diabetes, please make sure this information is on file with the emergency card in the office. Include a list of medications the child takes regularly and any warning signs or emergency procedures. If your child's condition requires him/her to miss school on a regular basis, please inform the school nurse. In an extended absence your child may be referred to programs offered by Baltimore City Public Schools so that he/she can minimize the loss of instruction and school work.

Medication

Students who have prescription medications that must be taken during the day must have the proper documentation completed before having the medicine administered in school. Medicine is only to be administered by a school nurse. *Teachers are not permitted to administer medications to students, and students may not take their own medicines without the nurse.*

Prescription medication must be kept in the original bottle that reflects the current dosage requirements. Over-the-counter medications will not be administered and should not be brought to school. *It is the parents' responsibility to give their children medications in a timely fashion. Please inform your child's teacher and the school nurse of any changes in medications.*

Restrictions from Activities

If a child needs to be restricted from certain activities, please provide the school nurse with a note from your child's physician describing the situation, restrictions, and duration.

Living Out Our Community Values: Supports and Interventions

At Creative City, a proactive approach is taken to build a community into which all students, teachers, and parents have input and buy-in. This community is built through intentionally designed experiences like Morning Meeting, a gathering each morning during which students, teachers, and staff prepare for the day, check in with each other, and share about their lives away from school. These gatherings serve to connect students and the staff with each other in ways that allow us to move more deeply into WHY we want and need to care for each other, building a desire for us to monitor our behaviors through self-motivation as opposed to through fear or shame, creating more lasting buy-in and commitment.

Academic Supports for Students

Special Education

Creative City is dedicated to meeting all of its students where they are and getting them where they need to be in order to succeed and achieve to their highest potential. Our special education services are primarily provided in an inclusion setting, which means the majority of students our students with special needs participate in the general education classroom as much as possible.

- We use a variety of strategies to ensure that our students with special needs are successful in all academic environments, including small group, heterogeneous classrooms or push-in, while group settings. We maximize our Core Elements (place-based, arts-integration, and project-based instruction), by applying principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), using a tiered Response to Intervention (RTI) model, and ensuring sufficient staffing to address individual needs.
- If you believe your child has a learning disability, please contact your child's teacher in writing or in person to request an IEP Team meeting to discuss your concerns. Once the request is made, it will be referred to our school's IEP Team Associate who will schedule a meeting and notify you about next steps.

Student Support Teams

Student support at Creative City takes many forms, including the strategies above, and parent-teacher communication. A classroom teacher may also seek to support student achievement, progress, and behavior by consulting with other teachers in their grade level team or with the Reading Specialist. If students are still having academic or behavioral problems (or both), one option is to convene a Student Support Team (SST). A Student Support Team is a General Education (not special education) problem-solving team.

The functions of the Student Support Team are as follows;

- Addressing the needs of students who have not adequately responded to classroom-based interventions that have been matched to their individual needs over a period of time.
- Reviewing any relevant information and data regarding behavior, learning, and response to interventions provided by teachers, parents, and health care providers.
- Meeting to discuss and develop plans to address student academic and behavioral needs.
 - Student Support Team Plan: a written plan that addresses a behavior that has been negatively impacting the student's achievement.
 - 504 Plans: a plan written after the SST determined that a student has a diagnosed physical and/or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Examples of these impairments include (but are not limited to): [1] Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); [2] AIDS; [3] Severe allergies and/or chemical sensitivities; [4] Severe emotional disturbance; or [5] Congenital drug addiction

How is a Student Referred to the Student Support Team?

Q: Who can make a referral?

A: Any staff member or parent can make a referral to the SST.

Q: How do you make a referral?

A: A staff member or parent can complete the Referral to Student Support Team form. It should be placed in the school Social Worker's mailbox.

Q: What happens after the referral is received?

A: The SST Chairperson (School Social Worker) will contact the person who made the referral with the date and time of the meeting. All attempts will be made to schedule the meeting within 2 weeks of the referral.

Q: Who will be invited to the SST meeting?

A: The SST Chairperson (School Social Worker), the person who made the referral, and the classroom teacher are required at each meeting. Related service providers who would have relevant input about the concern will also be invited. Parents/Guardians are invited and strongly encouraged to attend the meetings, but their attendance is not required.

Behavior Intervention and Preventing Problems

We believe in direct, honest, and respectful communication. We use many methods for good school-wide communication, including open Board meetings, School Family Association meetings, Monday Mailer newsletters, daily staff updates from the Principal, weekly professional development sessions, daily Community Breakfast, Administrator Breakfast sessions, and Parent-Teacher conferences.

Classroom Community

The classroom communities at Creative City should always seek to live out the values we recite with each other during our community breakfast. Teachers and staff at Creative City use several methods and strategies to maximize student safety, agency, and connection with each other and their academic work.

Empathy: Teachers and staff at Creative City are trained in the Restorative Practices and Mariposa approaches, both of which are models for increasing children’s social and emotional competence and resilience. Use of empathy and reflective listening are our staff’s first tools for redirecting a child who exhibits disruptive behavior.

Responsiveness: The *Responsive Classroom* approach to teaching emphasizes academic, social, and emotional growth in a strong school community. We believe that *how* children learn is as important as *what* they learn, and that academic success is inextricably tied to building social-emotional competencies. We provide K-8 educators with practical training and resources to help create safe and joyful classrooms and schools where children can thrive.

Within both the Responsive Classroom and Restorative Practices approaches, teachers may utilize the following strategies:

- **Classroom Community Rule Creation** creates the rules and expectations the community will need in order to help all of us achieve them. Talking about and making reminders about the rules is a daily occurrence.
- **Interactive Modeling:** Students are rarely ‘told’ what the routines and procedures of the school, class, and community will be. Teachers follow an elaborate process of teaching, acting out, and practicing every routine. This allows members of the community with a wide variety of learning styles to access the manner in which transitions and community standards are maintained in our shared spaces.
- **Empathic Language:** Students are listened to at Creative City. Teachers seek to hear the coded message that lies behind the behavior. If a student is angry, the teacher offers language to the student that expresses the student’s anger before moving into redirection, consequences, or conflict resolution. Often, after using Empathic Language, a teacher will solicit ideas from the student for how to solve the challenge. For example, “You are very angry that there are no sharp pencils left. I feel frightened when you yell. You need a sharp pencil, I need my students to not yell. How do we solve this problem?”
- **Logical Consequences:** When there is a need for students to face consequences for their behavior, teachers strive to make these consequences something that would address the behavior directly. Running in the hall would not be punished by taking away recess, the student would instead be sent back to starting point to walk, etc.
- **Guided Discovery:** Students are introduced to all materials in their classrooms and for special projects and given time to explore their many uses before being told how to use them. This allows the students to become experts at using the materials rather than being asked to explore academic content at the same time they are exploring technical skills.
- **Academic Choice:** Students are given a choice as to how they may display their knowledge. For example, during Writers Workshop, students learn the foundations of literacy (periods, capital

letters, spelling patterns) while being given choice as to what they write about. In math a student may choose to complete a page in their workbook, create flash cards with another student, or build a model to demonstrate knowledge of Number Bonds.

- **Classroom Organization:** Classrooms are created to emphasize the community element of each class. There are meeting areas for the whole class, for small groups, as well as for individual students. There are places for students who prefer to work in quiet and places where things may get a little noisier. There are relaxing places with pillows and beanbags and places with chairs and desks. All manner of learning styles are made room for in our learning spaces. Some classrooms have decompression stations for students who need a specific place for reflection and sensory stimulation to aid students in getting back on track.
- **Breaks to their classroom’s pre-arranged “buddy classroom.”** At times students are asked to take a break to another classroom to provide them time to step away from a stressful experience
- **Link classroom lessons or problem-solving to school-wide positive character words** that are determined for each month (e.g., Hope, etc.)

ReEngagement Support Team (REST) Services

The members of this team build relationships with and provide support for those students who are having social emotional and behavioral challenges that reduce their time in instruction and hinder their success. While the primary work will be done in the classroom with the student to minimize loss in instructional time for the student, REST has an assigned room where more intensive group work may be done with students.

REST’s roles include:

- Identifying students who have social emotional and behavioral challenges.
- Proactively scheduling groups (breakfast bunch, lunch bunch, check ins, etc.) for the identified students.
- Working with students to develop strategies to address their own behavior challenges before they become obstacles to their present situation
- Tracking data for these students to be used for further supports or to modify supports as needed
- Supporting administration in deescalating students in crisis when the need arises

Interventions for Students

For students who continue to struggle with anti-social or dangerous behaviors that end up detracting from our community’s health and well-being, a system of formal reminders, behavior reviews, and progressive consequences has been instituted. These consequences are generally used when the mix of classroom community-building strategies above has not worked and informal oral warnings have not been effective. The objective in laying these consequences out in detail is to support our core value of community and equity, applying consequences consistently across the student body and across different classrooms.

For a student receiving a consequence, it is important for the community to use the negative situation arising from that student’s behavior as a teachable moment. A student who does not follow directions during a Fire Drill needs to learn that the directions teachers give are given to help keep the student safe. A student who gets frustrated and breaks a pencil needs to learn how to channel and find a more productive/safe way

to express frustration. Every step of our consequence process centers around communication: Teacher-Student, Parent-Teacher, Parent-Student, Administrator-Student, etc., for the purpose of helping maximize the experiences to benefit the student's social/emotional growth.

Behavior Review Level 1: Formal Reminders

Formal reminders are a written mechanism for teachers to communicate with students when students have clearly violated one of our school norms. These formal reminders are a quick, but formal reminder of our expectations. No one formal reminder carries any consequence (unless determined so by the teacher, for example, cleaning up a mess made). However, formal reminders allow students to stop and think for a moment and, over time, allow us to document and address the small behaviors before large ones develop. This documentation is not part of the student's permanent record, but is a communication tool between teacher, student, parent and administration. Behaviors that may result in a Formal Reminder include:

- Disruptive Conduct in the Classroom, Hallway, or Bathroom: Talking too much, making unnecessary noise, distracting others, running within the school, or yelling.
- Not Following Directions: Refusing to comply with an adult's directions.
- Damaging Property: careless damage to property that is worth less than \$50. Staff perceive that the damage was accidental, but was brought on by a mistake, such as running in the hall and breaking some framed art.
- Possession of Electronic Devices or Cell Phones: No electronic or video devices including cell phones, games, iPods, mp3s, or CD players are allowed in school. (Please see separate cell phone policy.)
- Disrespect to an Adult: Speaking or otherwise interacting with an adult in a way perceived as disrespectful to the adult.
- Inappropriate Interactions with Younger Students: Interacting with younger students in a way that is intimidating and not mindful of our responsibility to set a good example.
- Inappropriate Language: Using inappropriate language, including swearing.
- Taunting or Teasing: Speaking or interacting with another student in a way that is demeaning or hurtful.
- Taking Care of Space: Leaving the classroom or school environment unclean or disorderly.

Typical consequences for formal reminders within the period of a month:

- Two Formal Reminders: Parent Communication
- Four Formal Reminders: Student Meeting with Teacher
- Seven Formal Reminders: Student Meeting with Parent and Teacher
- Twelve Formal Reminders: Parent conference with Teacher to collaboratively develop a Formal Behavior Review (see below)

Behavior Review Level 2

Level 2, 3, and 4 Formal Behavior Reviews are used for more serious and significant behaviors that lie far outside the values of Creative City. The review is completed by the student, teacher, parent, and administrator and encourages the child to formally process his or her behaviors. The completed form is then signed by the student and teacher, sent to the Principal, and sent home to be signed by the parents and returned to school the following day. These behaviors have a hierarchy of consequences. Behaviors that may result in Level 2 Behavior Review include:

- Significant Behavioral Disruption: Disruptive behaviors that continue after a warning and formal reminder have been given.
- Defying Authority: Purposefully or aggressively refusing to follow an adult's directions or yelling/screaming at a teacher.
- Damaging or Destroying Property: careless destruction of property of property worth more than \$50*
- Stealing: Taking or attempting to take property from another person.
- Leaving Class: Purposefully leaving the class but staying in view of the teacher.
- Verbal Threats: Verbally threatening to physically harm another person.
- Pushing/shoving/bumping another student during verbal fight
- Vulgar or Derogatory Statements or Gestures, Including the Distribution of Obscene Material: The use of vulgarity or derogatory statements verbally, electronically, by written words, in photographs, drawings or with obscene gestures

**For property damage, the student's family will be asked to make restitution for the damage, either by fixing it, paying for it, or contributing service to the school.*

1st Consequence: [Administrator Consequence]

2nd Consequence: [Administrator Consequence]

3rd or more Consequence: Formal Behavior Review (a meeting with teacher, parent, administrator, and student to determine other consequences)

Behavior Review Level 3

Behaviors that may result in Level 3 Behavior Review include:

- Physical Violence: Using violence (including but not limited to slapping, kicking, hitting and biting) or force to disrupt the educational process and/or cause bodily harm.
- Discriminatory Language or Verbal Abuse: Directing vulgarity or discriminatory language toward another person or group. Discriminatory Language includes words, names, or language that demeans as individual or group of people based on ability, race, gender, sexual orientation, culture, family structure, or socioeconomic status.
- Leaving class: leaving the class group without permission, leaving sight of staff members and refusing to come back, which creates a potentially dangerous situation (this results in an immediate call to the office and call home).
- Destruction of Property: intentional damage to school property*

**For property damage, the student's family will be asked to make restitution for the damage, either by fixing it, paying for it, or contributing service to the school.*

1st Consequence: [Administrator Consequence]

2nd Consequence: Immediate office referral, student placed in alternative learning environment until a Formal Behavior Review with student, teacher and administrator, parent contacted by administrator

3rd Consequence: Immediate office referral, student placed in alternative learning environment until a Formal Behavior Review with Parent, student, teacher and administrator

4th Consequence: Immediate office referral, student placed in alternative learning environment until a Formal Behavior Review with Parent, student, teacher and administrator, with Suspension options as determined by the Principal.

Behavior Review Level 4

Behavior that may result in a Level 4 Behavior Review includes:

- Vandalizing, Damaging, Defacing, or Destroying School Property*: Premeditated and willful destruction or school property and/or impairing the use of school property.
- Violent Behavior/Assault, Vicious fighting: Being in physical combat with another person, where blows are delivered or exchanged.
- Threat to an Adult: Verbal or physical threats made to any adult or any act intended to inflict harm, including throwing objects, hitting, pushing, shoving, biting, and/or kicking.
- Possession, Distribution, or Use of Tobacco and Alcohol Products

**For property damage, the student's family will be asked to make restitution for the damage, either by fixing it, paying for it, or contributing service to the school.*

Consequence of Level 4 Behavior: Out-of-School Suspension as determined by Principal, and a Formal Behavior Review with student, teacher & administrator

Extended Suspension or Expulsion

The following infractions are grounds for extended suspension or expulsion according to the BCPS code of conduct. The proper authorities will be contacted.

- Possession of or dealing drugs
- Possession of weapons, firearms or explosives
- Physical attack on an adult
- Setting a fire
- Causing serious bodily injury (permanent injury)
- Sexual assault
- Attempting to harm another student with a weapon

Cell Phones

Cell phones must remain in backpacks and turned off or completely silent during the school day. Our general policy is "If we see or hear a cell phone, we take it."

- 1st time: The cell phone is confiscated and can be retrieved by the student at the end of the day.
- 2nd time: The cell phone is confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian or their designee
- 3rd time: The cell phone is confiscated until the parent/guardian meets with an administrator.

Toys and Personal Items

Please do not allow your child to bring toys, games, or electronic devices (other than cell phones) to school when they are not part of the planned school activities.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

The Maryland Penal Code requires all "child care custodians" (teachers, teacher's assistants, the school nurse, coaches, administrators, and staff members) to report known or suspected incidents of child abuse. As required, any suspected abuse will be reported to a child protective services agency immediately. Any families needing resources or support in preventing child abuse or reporting child abuse that they are aware of can ask staff for referrals.

Bullying

All students have the right to a safe, supportive school environment, free from bullying and harassment. Maryland law and Board of School Commissioners policy require it, and Creative City is committed to it. Bullying is a serious problem that can happen anywhere, and we take all incidents of bullying and harassment seriously. Anyone – students, parents, or staff - can report a situation that may be bullying or harassment and it will be immediately investigated.

Option 1. Contact us at school to report the incident. Our principal (or designee) *must* investigate within two school days of receiving a report, and parents should expect to hear about resolution within two further school days. The principal also reports the investigation and action taken to the district office in this time frame, using this investigation form.

Option 2. Complete a "Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Form." Reports can be completed and submitted online or by printing out a hard copy (<http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/bullying>) and submitting the completed form to the school. If you don't have access to a printer, copies can also be obtained in our main office.

Appropriate disciplinary action is taken, as outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Before and After School

Afterschool Programs and Enrichment Clubs

Afterschool programs, clubs and instructional assistance that occurs beyond regular school hours must be cleared by the administrative staff and must receive parental permission for each student's participation. Following the activity/club, it is the responsibility of the adult leading the club to escort the children to the front door to ensure that they are picked up and/or clear the premises. Certain programs may have eligibility requirements such as grade level or academic need. These requirements will be communicated to families.

After-Hours Events

Student and adult conduct at after-hours events has important effects for our school culture. It reinforces a sense of respect when inside the school – a tone that carries over into our daily work. Therefore, the school's basic policies regarding student behavior – no running, shouting, climbing, or going outdoors without an adult – remain in effect.

However, staff members are off-duty after hours. Parents are responsible for supervising their children at all times. These include evening or weekend events, committee meetings, family-teacher conferences, and all activities at the school. In the event that a student's behavior becomes dangerous or distracting during an event, the families will be asked to remove the child and reestablish order before returning to the event.

Visiting Creative City

Visitors are welcome at Creative City. All visitors, volunteers, and family members must first sign in with the office and receive a visitor's pass. If you are visiting a classroom, please check in with the office first. There are many opportunities for you to visit the classroom and the school – events, art celebrations, classroom activities, and family-teacher conferences.

We deeply value families' engagement in our children's learning as well as the teaching and learning culture of each individual classroom. Volunteers who will be in close contact with students must go through a background check with Baltimore City Schools. Please communicate in advance with your child's teacher if you wish to volunteer so we are prepared to welcome you to the classroom. We will always defer to our teachers about how classroom volunteers will be used. Please reference the "Volunteering at Creative City" later in this handbook!

Parking

See page 11. Please do not use Shirley Avenue cul-de-sac for school-day parking, or for student arrival or dismissal.

Communication at Creative City

Contact Us

If you have questions, concerns, or need help, please contact us at the school office. Please let the school secretary Ms. Worrell know how we can help you, or with whom you need to speak. Office hours are from 8:00 am until 3:30 pm each day. We can be contacted by:

Phone: 443-642-3600

Fax: 410-466-6207

E-mail: CLWorrell@bcps.k12.md.us

Contacting You

It is very important that we have up-to-date contact information for you in our files. Please be sure that you complete an Emergency Card at registration and/or during the first week of school. If your contact information changes, please let us know immediately.

Creative City Website

The Creative City website often has updated information or general school literature (like this handbook!). The website can be found at www.creativecityschool.org.

Monday Mailer

A strong partnership between families and the school ultimately benefits the child. Therefore, we will make every effort to communicate news, upcoming events, and what is happening at school. As part of our dynamic school and curriculum, a lot happens on a daily and weekly basis. Therefore, we ask you to make every effort to stay informed about your child's school and education.

Our main form of communication between school and home is the Monday Mailer, which will be sent home with your child each Monday afternoon. Monday Mailers will contain a weekly newsletter with important information and events, important notices, and communications from the larger Creative City community. Please make it a habit to ask your child for the Monday Mailer each week. In the mailer there may be time-sensitive and valuable information regarding your child, the school, and the community. Read the Monday Mailer, respond to any requests for signing or returning forms, and if you have any questions please contact the school office. Unless we hear from you, we will assume that all information communicated through the Monday Mailer has been read and understood.

Report Cards and Family Conferences

Progress reports will be distributed to families in October, January and May. Parents or guardians are to sign and return the second page of the report, indicating that they have received and read it.

Report cards will be distributed each trimester. Families will be kept abreast of a student's ongoing progress throughout the year through in-class student portfolios, displays of student work, and sending student work home regularly with students to share with their families. Notifications will be sent to families regarding family-teacher conferences, the dates and times will be posted on the school calendar, posted on the website and also in school newsletters. Individual invitations will also be sent to families as reminders and to encourage families to sign up to participate in these very important conferences.

Communication with Teachers

Teachers are accessible to families throughout the school year. It is important to arrange a time that is mutually convenient rather than consulting the teacher spontaneously or during class time, or dismissal. Before-school and afterschool conferences are welcomed and can be scheduled directly with your child's teacher. Teachers may also feel the need to meet with you; please make yourself available. Our school also uses Class Dojo as a communication tool. Please contact your classroom teacher for information on joining their class on Class Dojo.

Enrollment and Transfers

Please check the website or call the school for current information. Siblings of enrolled students have preference in the admissions process but must submit an application to be considered. We also have a geography preference in place that reserves 20% of available space at lottery for residents of a defined area of Park Heights.

If you decide to permanently leave Creative City, please notify our office in writing so that we have time to prepare the necessary paperwork. Please provide us with your child's last day of attendance, name of the new school, and your new address and/or temporary contact.

Conflict Resolution

If conflicts between parents and staff or between staff members cannot be resolved through face-to-face communication, a neutral third party may be called in to help facilitate a confidential problem-solving session and develop a written agreement, if desired. These sessions are set up neutrally at the convenience of all parties, and participation is voluntary. Once again, these strategies of direct communication can be used at any stage of a problem, even when a problem seems small or when formal consequence has already been given or a grievance has been made (see below).

- **Community Mediation:** Creative City has an agreement with Community Mediation, a local group that provides free conflict resolution facilitation for schools, neighborhoods, and families. Participants in mediation talk about the conflict, define a list of topics to be resolved, and brainstorm solutions that work for everyone.
- **Community Conferencing:** Similarly, the Community Conferencing Center can offer free neutral facilitation of restorative justice circles when there is a group of students or group of adults having a conflict or someone has caused harm within the Creative City community.
- **Peer Mediation:** As Creative City grows into having full enrollment in upper grades, we aspire to create a peer mediation model in the future, where students in 5th grade can be trained to mediate student-student disputes.

Grievances

Creative City places high value on open channels of communication throughout the school. The voices of students, parents and family members, staff, and the community are important to us. In the event that a parent or family member has a concern about our school, they are asked to follow this series of progressive steps to voice their concern and find resolution. We **STRONGLY** recommend that concerns be brought to the attention of the appropriate person immediately, even if they are perceived to be quite small. It is easier to address and resolve a small problem than a big one.

- Step 1. Contact the classroom teacher.** Especially for issues related to instruction, it is critically important to have open lines of communication with your child's teacher(s) and to feel comfortable bringing concerns to him/her.
- Step 2. Contact the Principal.** The Principal is the Instructional Leader of the school and has the responsibility of overseeing all instructional staff and our curriculum.
- Step 3. Contact the Executive Director.** The Executive Director represents the school Operator. The Operator has been granted authority by the Baltimore City School District to operate Creative City within the school district. The Principal reports to the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that we fulfill our mission as approved in our charter.
- Step 4. Bring issue to the Board of Directors by contacting the Board President via phone or email.** The Board of Directors is a group of elected representatives who have legal and financial responsibility for the school's operation, and who broadly oversee our mission. Per our bylaws, at least 51% of the members of our Board of Directors are family members of currently enrolled students. If a grievance is brought to the Board of Directors, the Board President will:
- appoint an ad hoc committee of three Board members to hear and review the concern.
 - strive to have that group include at least one parent and at least one staff member, with a third member at the discretion of the Board President.
 - make best effort to a) avoid individuals with direct conflicts of interest, and b) include individuals with subject-matter expertise relevant to the grievance (i.e. special education, curriculum, climate, etc)

Volunteering at Creative City

Volunteers are essential to our work at Creative City! We need your help to keep Creative City running smoothly, serving our children and our mission. There are many ways to volunteer with Creative City, both in and outside of the classroom and in and outside of the school building. Please see Chanei Clemons, our Community School Coordinator, or Marisa Canino, our Executive Director, for more information about these various volunteer opportunities.

Volunteering on the Board or with a Committee

Every parent or guardian of Creative City students is eligible to run for vacant seats on the Creative City Board. Committee membership is strongly recommended as a stepping stone to running for the Board of Directors.

In addition, all family and community members are encouraged to serve on one of the seven Creative City Committees designed to address the various needs of the school: the Finance Committee; the Teaching and Learning Committee; the Facilities Committee; the School Family Association; the Outreach and Partnerships Committee; the Climate, Culture and Attendance Committee, and the Governance Committee. You do not need to be an elected member of the Board of Directors to serve on a committee.

The **Finance Committee** is responsible for developing and reviewing procedures to provide adequate fiscal controls, ensuring that the CCPCSF is in good financial health, and working with the Executive Director on developing fundraising strategies and assisting in their execution. The Treasurer serves on the Finance Committee, and at least one other member should have finance and fundraising expertise.

The **Teaching and Learning Committee** (TLC) helps identify macro trends in school-wide academic data, acts as a convener between parents and staff to discuss or learn about aspects of our school curriculum (i.e. Math Night, Literacy Night, etc), and supports the development of diverse partnerships for field trips, cultural experiences, and place-based explorations.

The **Facilities Committee** is responsible for addressing issues arising with respect to the school building, the grounds, and surrounding areas.

The **School Village Association** is our version of a PTA/PTO and focuses its work on ensuring that all interested stakeholders are involved in the development of the school. It will encourage the participation of parents, students, and community members and partners to improve the school and make it the best possible place to educate our children. It works towards improving family involvement, continuous school improvement via volunteering and fundraising, and addressing family concerns.

The **Outreach & Partnership Committee** ensures broad community awareness and a positive image of our school to support new student enrollment and to develop community partnerships, mutually beneficial relationships with our Park Heights neighbors, and strong relationships within our school community. Outreach Committee members may staff outreach tables, do neighborhood canvassing, assist SVA in planning events, work with community associations, or plan community-building events within our school.

The **Climate and Attendance Committee** helps identify macro trends in school wide climate & attendance data, acts as a convener between parents and school for relevant discussions and information sessions (i.e. Responsive Classroom, Mindful Moments, review of our School Family Compact, attendance incentives, etc), and supports the development of school-wide partnerships that will support strategic climate/ attendance goals or needs that are evidenced by data.

The **Governance Committee** recruits, orients, and equips members of the Board of Directors, and coordinates the Annual Meeting, in addition to coordinating any bylaws-related issues.

Volunteering with a Class

We are committed to making our education responsive to each child at Creative City. Classroom volunteers help us to meet this goal by working with small groups, assisting with projects, working one-on-one with students, and helping to prepare materials.

Volunteers who will be in close contact with students must undergo a background check. These checks are required by the district to protect your children. The results are kept completely confidential, and are only used to screen out people who may pose a danger to children. (In other words, please do not assume that any past mistakes will keep you from being able to volunteer at Creative City!) Please see Ms. Clemons, our Community School Coordinator, for more information.

Other ways to volunteer

There are many different ways to volunteer, too numerous to mention. Here are a few options:

- Assist with the cafeteria during breakfast and/or lunch
- Assist with dismissal
- Be a guest presenter or guest artist
- Read to children
- Do art or math games with students
- Chaperone field trips and neighborhood walks
- Collect supplies for projects
- Build and maintain Creative City Farm and Natural Playground

Volunteer Log Book

Please sign in the volunteer log book when you come inside the school so we can track the valuable contributions you are bringing to our school.

Contact Us at Creative City

Administrative Staff

Ms. Traci Mathena	Principal	TMathena@bcps.k12.md.us 443-642-3600
Mr. Steve Peterson	Educational Associate	SSPeterson@bcps.k12.md.us 443-642-3600
Ms. Marisa Canino	Executive Director	MCanino@bcps.k12.md.us 443-642-3602
Ms. Crystal Worrell	School Secretary	CLWorrell@bcps.k12.md.us 443-642-3600
Ms. Cari “CiCi” Williams	Intervention Admin. Assistant	443-642-3600
Ms. Chanei Clemons	Community School Coordinator	CClemons@bcps.k12.md.us 443-642-3613
Ms. Ashley Hoard	Enrollment Coordinator	AHoard@bcps.k12.md.us 443-642-3612

Contact any staff by phone by dialing our main number, 443-642-3600.

